

Poll on Charges Against Nixon

Washington

A survey of public reaction to discussion of possible impeachment of President Nixon shows that 79 per cent of those polled in depth believe one or more of the most serious charges against the President is justified.

The poll was conducted by the Roper organization for 51 subscribers including the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU).

While the poll shows a slim majority against impeachment 45 per cent to 44, indications are that opposition stems not from belief in the President's innocence but from fear of the destructive effect an impeachment proceeding would have.

Only 11 per cent of those opposed to impeachment said they took that position because they believed the charges unjustified.

The figures lead Roper analysts to conclude that "the President would seem to have a thin hold indeed on his office in the court of public opinion."

The Roper Poll, a syndicated subscription public opinion service conducted ten times a year, was made

available to the New York Times by the ACLU and will be used by that organization as part of its formal campaign to impeach the President.

The poll was conducted among a scientifically selected sample of 2020 persons who were interviewed in early November, before the disclosure of the 18-minute gap in a key White House tape subpoenaed as evidence by the U.S. District Court here.

Charles Morgan Jr., director of the ACLU's national office in Washington said that the poll was the most complete and in-depth study on attitudes toward impeachment and does not have the inherent bias of other polls that simply ask for a yes or no answer on the impeachment question."

An analysis of the poll results indicates that four of five among those polled believe that one or more of 13 charges or criticisms against Mr. Nixon are serious and probably involve him. More than 50 per cent included in this category believe the charge that the President was involved in covering up the Watergate break-in, and that he is with-

holding evidence from the Senate Watergate committee and the special Watergate prosecutor's office.

Most of the concern of those polled, in fact, seemed to center on the President's withholding of information.

New York Times